

# World War II KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER



## ESSENTIAL WORLD WAR II VOCABULARY

<b>conscripted</b>	Required by law to serve their country in some way, usually in the armed forces.
<b>allies</b>	The 26 nations that fought against the Axis in WW2. The United Kingdom, France and Poland, later joined by other countries, including the USSR (Soviet Union), the United States of America and China.
<b>axis</b>	The military alliance made up of Germany, Italy and Japan.
<b>annex</b>	Adding territory to one's own territory.
<b>gestapo</b>	The Nazi's secret police force.
<b>rationing</b>	Allowing each person to only have a fixed amount of something.
<b>evacuee</b>	A person evacuated from a place of danger.
<b>commemorate</b>	Mark or remember a past event
<b>Home front</b>	Doing things at home to support the war was called 'fighting on the home front'
<b>dictator</b>	A ruler with total power over a country.
<b>invade</b>	Entering an area by force in order to take over.
<b>army</b>	An organised military force equipped for fighting.
<b>battle</b>	A sustained fight between large organised armed forces.
<b>government</b>	The group of people with the authority to govern a country or state.

Key Events		
1939	1 <sup>st</sup> September	German troops invade Poland.
	3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Britain and France declare war on Germany.
1940	10 <sup>th</sup> May	The Battle of France begins.
	26 <sup>th</sup> May	Allied forces are <b>evacuated</b> from Dunkirk in France.
	10 <sup>th</sup> July	The Battle of Britain begins.
	7 <sup>th</sup> September	The Blitz begins.
1941	7 <sup>th</sup> December	Japan bombs Pearl Harbor in the US.
1944	6 <sup>th</sup> June	The D-Day landings.
1945	7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Germany surrenders to the <b>Allies</b> . VE Day (Victory in Europe Day) is celebrated the next day.
	6 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> August	The US drops <b>atomic bombs</b> on two cities in Japan.
	2 <sup>nd</sup> September	Japan formally surrenders, ending the war.



**Fun fact!** The Battle of Britain (fought between the German Luftwaffe and the Royal Air Force) was the first ever battle to be fought only in the air.

## Commemorative Events



Every year, special celebrations are planned to honour and remember the people whose lives were affected by the war. Large **commemorations** are usually held for events including the **evacuation** from Dunkirk, Holocaust Memorial Day, VE Day, D-Day and the Battle of Britain, as well as for Remembrance Day.



In order to make food and other supplies last as long as possible and ensure they were shared fairly, many items were **rationed**.



The government's 'Dig for Victory' campaign encouraged people to grow their own food. Some people also reared their own animals for meat and eggs. Clothes and other items were mended or made into new things.

## The Home Front

Although national sports events were suspended during the war, there was plenty of entertainment. The radio was very popular and people also went to the cinema or dance halls. Children played outside or with board games, cards or handmade toys.



Over 3.5 million people, mostly children, were **evacuated** from the cities to the countryside, where it was believed they would be safer from bombing.

With men away at war, women took on important jobs to help the war effort. Jobs included working in factories, engineering and shipbuilding, driving ambulances and nursing, working as Land Girls or air-raid wardens, or joining the armed forces themselves.

## The Armed Forces

Before the war, people volunteered for the armed forces but as the war progressed, men and women had to register for National Service. This **conscription** meant that they could then be 'called up' into the armed forces or into other jobs to help the war effort. Women were not given combat roles but they did many different jobs in the armed forces.

## The Battle of Britain

In July 1940, Germany planned a secret mission to invade Britain. They began by sending the Luftwaffe (German air force) to bomb British ships, airfields and other targets. RAF (Royal Air Force) planes fought back in what were known as **dogfights**.



Believing they were winning, the Luftwaffe moved on to bombing London on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940 (the start of the Blitz). On 15<sup>th</sup> September, the Luftwaffe launched another attack but the RAF fought back and it was clear that the Germans would not be able to win. This date is **commemorated** every year as the end of the Battle of Britain.